



COLD EXPOSURE

Cold exposure, or regular contact with cold temperatures, is a practice that has become increasingly popular thanks to its physical and mental benefits. It not only improves the body's resilience to cold but also has a broad positive impact on health, recovery, and mental well-being.

WHY CAN STARTING WITH COLD EXPOSURE BE A GOOD IDEA?

1. Physical benefits of cold exposure:

Improved circulation:

Cold exposure enhances blood flow, supporting cardiovascular health and helping to better oxygenate tissues.

Strengthening the immune system:

Cold water activates the immune system, which may temporarily reduce susceptibility to illnesses and infections. However, this effect is short-term — while immune activity spikes after cold exposure, a long-term effect on overall immunity has not yet been scientifically proven.

Recovery:

After demanding training or physical activity, cold exposure helps reduce inflammation and muscle soreness. This can be very useful if you need quick recovery before your next session. However, if your goal is to build muscle, inflammation is part of the natural adaptation process, and in this context cold exposure can actually be counterproductive — even if only by a few percent.

2. Mental benefits of cold exposure:

Increased resilience to stress:

Cold exposure trains the mind to become more resistant to stressful situations, contributing to better psychological well-being.

Presence in the moment:

Cold exposure is a powerful form of meditation. While in the cold, your full attention is drawn to your breath and the present moment.

Improved mood:

Contact with cold water triggers the release of endorphins, which elevate mood and reduce feelings of anxiety.

Greater mental toughness:

Enduring the cold is a mental challenge that strengthens discipline, perseverance, and the ability to overcome personal limits.

THE PRINCIPLE OF HORMESIS

Cold exposure is a process where mild stress (in this case, cold) stimulates the body toward positive adaptations. This “small dose of stress” activates regenerative processes, boosts immunity, and supports overall health. As with other hormetic factors, the key is balance: the stimulus should be appropriate. Starting with extreme cold exposure can cause negative effects such as hypothermia or illness, which is why it's crucial to approach this activity responsibly and increase intensity gradually.

WHY AND HOW TO START CAREFULLY

Choose the right level:

If you are new to cold exposure, it's important not to start too intensely. Begin gradually, for example with lukewarm water or short cold showers. Over time, you can either use colder environments or extend the duration of exposure.

Listen to your body:

If you feel unwell or notice that the stress is too overwhelming, it's better to stop and adjust.